



A MESSAGE FROM JILL MORRIS, HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR

British Embassy Rome

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Following the publication of the UK's [White Paper](#) on the future relationship with the EU in July 2018, I would like to update you on the state of negotiations and what the British government is doing to prepare for the UK's exit from the EU.

Developments in the negotiations

Building on the agreement reached in March, the UK and EU negotiating teams have made further progress in finalising the [draft Withdrawal Agreement](#) by agreeing on the majority of separation issues. At the same time, the UK and EU have had constructive discussions on the few remaining issues in the text, including Northern Ireland, data, and police and judicial cooperation.

At the same time, the UK has been pursuing negotiations on the future relationship. The UK released the [White Paper](#) in July, which set out our plan for a deep and special future partnership with the EU which would respect the sovereignty of the UK and the autonomy of the EU. The White Paper proposes a comprehensive future economic partnership, based on a free trade area in goods and agri-food products, a 'common rulebook' of shared regulatory standards for goods, and an ambitious agreement on services. The White Paper also contains proposals to create a security partnership to protect British and European nationals from threats such as crime and terrorism; and a 'mobility framework' of visa free travel, with support for businesses to provide services and for young people to study. The UK and the EU are now negotiating these proposals, with the aim of finalising the Withdrawal Agreement and agreeing a framework for the Future Relationship in October.

The UK is also preparing a series of technical notices for businesses and citizens. This is the next phase of our ongoing preparations for all potential scenarios in negotiations - including the unlikely event that no agreement with the EU can be reached. These technical notices are being published over the coming months to help businesses and citizens prepare in the event of a no-deal scenario.

We remain confident that we will secure a positive and ambitious deal with the EU, but I appreciate that this is a period of uncertainty. We want to help you prepare for all scenarios. These technical notices do not mean an increased likelihood or expectation of a “no deal”. They instead demonstrate that the UK’s is preparing for all scenarios, like the European Commission who also published ‘No Deal’ notices earlier this year.

Citizens’ Rights – Q & A

As you may already know, I hold regular town hall meetings with British nationals to update you on the state of negotiations and answer your questions. Colleagues and I have held meetings in Rome, Florence, Venice, Naples and Milan. See below answers to the questions that I am asked the most, which I hope will be useful and will help you to make decisions about the future.

What has been agreed so far on Citizens’ Rights?

The UK and EU agreed the key principles on Citizens’ Rights in December 2017. The agreement says that if you are a UK National who legally resides in any EU Member State, e.g. Italy before the end of 2020, then you will be able to continue doing so afterwards in broadly the same way. So if you’re living, working, studying or retired in Italy you’ll be able to keep on doing those things. You also should be able to access healthcare and social security, just as you did before. There are a few areas that are yet to be resolved, which will be discussed in the next phase of negotiations.

The agreement will apply to any UK nationals who move to the EU (or EU citizens moving to the UK), before the end of December 2020. The deal on citizens’ rights is reciprocal, which means the same agreements apply to UK nationals in the rest of the EU and to EU citizens living in the UK.

What happens next?

The UK and EU negotiating teams are working to agree the outstanding issues from the Withdrawal Agreement, such as the Irish border. The White Paper is the UK’s proposal for addressing some of these issues, and makes suggestions for the future. There are a few issues relevant to Citizens’ Rights that will be addressed in the next phase of negotiations, after October. These are topics which I know are of great importance to Brits in Italy, such as onward freedom of movement, the right to have professional qualifications recognised, and the right for lawyers to practice under home title. These will be a priority for the next phase of negotiations.

What do I need to do to prepare?

As a UK national in Italy you need to register with a Comune if you plan to stay in the country for longer than three months. If you meet the Italian government's requirements, please consider applying for permanent residency. The Citizens Rights agreement gives EU Member States the right to introduce new administrative procedures for British nationals resident in their countries. The Italian government has so far given us no indication that they will introduce new administrative processes. We will inform you as soon as we are made aware of any changes.

What rights will my family have?

The Citizens Rights agreement will cover your close family members provided you are lawfully residing in Italy at the end of December 2020. Close family members are defined as spouses, civil partners, unmarried partners, dependent children and grandchildren, and dependent grandparents. The deal will also include close family members from third countries, and children born or adopted after the end of December 2020. If you choose to return to the UK, your close family members will also be able to join you.

What happens to my pension/healthcare rights?

The UK State Pension is payable worldwide under domestic UK legislation. People covered by the Withdrawal Agreement will keep receiving an uprated UK State Pension if they are resident in an EU member state by the end of the implementation period and for as long as you remain in scope of the Agreement. This also includes people who are not yet at state pension age once they do start drawing their pension.

Individuals of UK state pension age and resident in the EU by the end of the implementation period will also continue to receive associated reciprocal healthcare (S1) cover alongside their state pension, for as long as they remain in scope of the Agreement.

People who are below state pension age – for example a 55-year-old living in Italy – will continue to have the right to reciprocal healthcare once they start drawing their UK state pension, providing they are resident in the EU by the end of the implementation period in December 2020.

Will British citizens be able to apply for citizenship after 4 years residence (for EU nationals) or will they have to prove 10 years (for 3rd country nationals)?

This is a decision for the Italian government, who have not yet made a decision. We regularly raise this question at the highest political levels.

What's happening to the 'right to vote' for British Nationals overseas?

A Private Members' bill called the Overseas Electors Bill is currently making its way through Parliament. The Bill will give British Nationals who have been overseas for more than 15 years

the right to vote in future parliamentary elections. The House of Commons held a Second reading of the Bill on the 23 February and MPs voted to allow the Bill to proceed to Committee Stage. The date for the Bill to be discussed in Committee has not yet been announced. The Government fully supports the Bill before Parliament, which was a manifesto commitment

For more detail on citizens' rights, please see:

- a) [Citizens rights' text](#)
- b) [UK Government information for British Nationals in the EU](#)
- c) [Settled Status for EU citizens living in the UK](#)
- d) [UK Government website which is regularly updated.](#)
- e) [UK Parliament website to see the progress of the Overseas Electors Bill.](#)

What happens to UK nationals in the event of no-deal?

No deal is not the outcome that either side wants. The UK and the EU are both focused on finalising the Withdrawal Agreement in October. But it is a possibility that both sides have a responsibility to prepare for. The government is currently drawing up contingency plans, and we expect that more information will be released in the autumn. I am conscious that we are asking you for even more patience, but we will continue to offer you as much clarity as possible. The Embassy will continue running our Town-Hall meetings across the country, and issuing updates via newsletter and Facebook. I regularly speak to the Italian government about Citizens' Rights, as well as meeting with groups like British in Italy to understand your concerns. I am personally committed to ensuring that you receive timely information as we move forward, and that we respond quickly to your questions and concerns.

Save the Date: Town-Hall in Milan

I will be meeting UK Nationals on 27 September from 7 to 8pm at the British Council in Milan ([Via Alessandro Manzoni 38](#)) – an invitation will follow. If you already know you would like to attend, please send us an email as space is limited: BritishEmbassyRome.Events@fco.gov.uk

Please continue to follow our Embassy on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts for further updates.

As ever, I and my team very much look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Jill Morris CMG

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Italy

Should you wish to receive this newsletter directly, and are not currently doing so, please write to ufficiopolitico@fco.gov.uk